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69316 7590 09/01/2011 MICROSOFT CORPORATION ONE MICROSOFT WAY REDMOND, WA 98052				
EXAMINER				
STRODER, CARRIE A				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3689				
NOTIFICATION DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
09/01/2011		ELECTRONIC		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/696,972

Applicant(s)

SORENSEN, CARSTEN

Examiner

CARRIE A. STRODER

Art Unit

3689

Period for Reply
-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 June 2011.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ An election was made by the applicant in response to a restriction requirement set forth during the interview on ____; the restriction requirement and election have been incorporated into this action.
- 4) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 11, 13-18 and 38-50 is/are pending in the application.
- 5a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 11, 13-18 and 38-50 is/are rejected.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 9) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 10) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-609)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 21 Apr 2011
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: ____

DETAILED ACTION

1. This is in response to the applicant's communication filed on 27 June 2011, wherein:

Claims 11, 13-18, and 38-50 are currently pending;
claims 11 and 13 are currently amended;
claims 1-10, 12, and 19-37 are cancelled; and
claims 38-50 are new.

Information Disclosure Statement

1. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 21 April 2011 includes a document which is completely in a foreign language which Examiner cannot read. Examiner cannot even confirm if the document submitted is the document referred to in the IDS. For this reason, the document, "Korean Patent Application..." is not being considered by Examiner. All other documents submitted have been considered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. **Claim 47 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph,** as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 47 states, "...wherein receiving job information..." which is confusing because neither claim 47, nor claim 45, on which it is dependent, have the step of "receiving job information."

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. **Claims 11, 13-18, and 38-50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)** as being unpatentable over Hajmiragha (US 6289460), in view of Beran et al. (US 20020055888), and further in view of Heimermann et al. (US 7110976).

Referring to claim 11:

Hajmiragha discloses

the document template having a plurality of fields comprising: a category field, a job description field for the requested job, and a date of delivery field (col. 7, lines 22-62; "...document type..." is interpreted as category, "For example, John Smith is requested to review, or sign, a given document by a specific date" where the requested activity is the job description field and the date is the date of delivery);

using the processor to save the document at a predetermined location in a data store local to a computer system at the requester (col. 5, line 61 thru col. 6, line 8 and col. 7, lines 10-21; "Document publication is the process by which a user extracts a copy of the document" and "Then, the user appoints a target directory for the file" and "The external document is indexed once and access to the external document is managed by the document manager 21 using the Access Control List facilities." and where the user may save the document in a local data store and then designate the document as an external document); and

using the processor to send indexing information related to the document to an index remote from the computer system of the requester (col. 7, lines 10-21; "The external document is

indexed..." and "...access speed to documents externally stored in a repository...").

Hajmiragha discloses a document management system. Hajmiragha does not disclose providing supplier registration information from the requester to a registration component and downloading an RFQ generation engine to the requester, after the RFQ engine is downloaded to the requester, using the RFQ generation engine at the requester to enter the job information into a predetermined RFQ template, and where a document is an RFQ template and entering the job information into a predetermined RFQ template, and where the RFQ template has a field of an expiration date field indicative of an expiration date for the RFQ.

However, Beran teaches a similar system that handles documents for requisitioning goods and services. Beran teaches providing supplier registration information from the requester to a registration component (paragraphs 16 and 22-26; "The software system implementation includes an agency registration module 200, a vendor registration module 202, a login module 204, an agency system administrator module 206, an agency requisitioner module 208, an agency buyer module 210, an agency approver module 212, a vendor access module 214 and a batch module 216.");

downloading an RFQ generation engine to the requester (paragraphs 16 and 22-26; "The software system implementation includes an agency registration module 200, a vendor registration module 202, a login module 204, an agency system administrator module 206, an agency requisitioner module 208, an agency buyer module 210, an agency approver module 212, a vendor access module 214 and a batch module 216." and where using the internet via a web page to request document data requires that the information be downloaded);

after the RFQ engine is downloaded to the requester, using the RFQ generation engine at the requester to enter the job information into a predetermined RFQ template, where the RFQ template has a field of an expiration date field indicative of an expiration date for the RFQ (paragraphs 22-27 & 60; "As shown in FIG. 4, a requisitioner first enters request document data on an HTML header page that has been provided to the user/requisitioner 400. The software enabling the entry of request document data is part of the agency requisitioner module 208. The request document header data for entry preferably includes a reference number for the request document and a confirming number" and where the web page is interpreted as an RFQ template and the web page must be downloaded before it can be used to enter the request information and "This record will

continue to store vendor responses until the bidding closing date specified in the original RFX record" where the bidding closing date is interpreted as the expiration date); and

where the document is an RFQ template (paragraph 27; "As shown in FIG. 4, a requisitioner first enters request document data on an HTML header page that has been provided to the user/requisitioner 400. The software enabling the entry of request document data is part of the agency requisitioner module 208. The request document header data for entry preferably includes a reference number for the request document and a confirming number" and where the web page is interpreted as a template).

It would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art (PHOSITA) at the time of invention to modify the system disclosed in Hajmiragha to incorporate providing supplier registration information from the requester to a registration component and downloading an RFQ generation engine to the requester, after the RFQ engine is downloaded to the requester, using the RFQ generation engine at the requester to enter the job information into a predetermined RFQ template, where the RFQ template has a field of an expiration date field indicative of an expiration date for the RFQ, and where a document is an RFQ template and entering the job information

into a predetermined RFQ template as taught by Beran because this would provide a manner for directing what the replies to the RFQ's should include, thus aiding the client by providing the desired information.

Hajmiragha and Beran disclose a document management system. Hajmiragha and Beran do not disclose the RFQ template having a field comprising an award criteria field indicative of criteria considered in awarding the requested job to a supplier; receiving, at the requester, one or more replies to the RFQ template from one or more suppliers; and automatically evaluating the one or more received replies based on the award criteria in the RFQ template and identifying a supplier based on the evaluation.

However, Heimermann teaches a similar system which handles documents for requisitioning goods and services. Heimermann teaches

the RFQ template having a field comprising an award criteria field indicative of criteria considered in awarding the requested job to a supplier (col. 20, lines 14-18 and col. 29, lines 31-45; "Orders...are posted in the Internet Web site procurement forum by the system as a solicitation for bids to fill such orders" and "...order-negotiation parameters entered into the Order Negotiations Parameter Setting sub-element (Fig.

2) (28) of the Central Procurement Authority Functions (13) of the Internal Module (2) of the System by C.P.A. officials, the System makes deductive determinations as to which bid to accept to fill orders in a manner optimal for government and similar entities" and where "orders" are interpreted as an RFQ as they are defined as requests for bids, or quotations);

receiving, at the requester, one or more replies to the RFQ template from one or more suppliers (col. 29, lines 46-56; "...lowest-price bid..."); and

automatically evaluating the one or more received replies based on the award criteria in the RFQ template and identifying a supplier based on the evaluation (col. 29, line 46 thru col. 30, line 14; "...automatic acceptance of a bid...").

It would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art (PHOSITA) at the time of invention to modify the system disclosed in Hajmiragha and Beran to incorporate the RFQ template having a field comprising an award criteria field indicative of criteria considered in awarding the requested job to a supplier; receiving, at the requester, one or more replies to the RFQ template from one or more suppliers; and automatically evaluating the one or more received replies based on the award criteria in the RFQ template and identifying a supplier based on the evaluation as taught by Heimermann because

this would provide a manner for automatically making awards of the requested jobs, thus aiding the client by making their job easier and more cost effective, since the awarding is done according to objective criteria by a computer, rather than by humans who may have a personal preference.

Referring to claim 13:

Hajmiragha discloses

entering the job information into a predetermined document template, wherein the job information is entered into the document template by the requester and comprises: (col. 7, lines 33-54; "A set of process flow templates are used during the Access Control List definition process." and "During Access Control List definition, a document acquires the following attributes: Users allowed access to the document..." and where the user requests the tasks for completion);

filter criteria indicative of suppliers authorized to reply to the document template (col. 7, lines 33-54; "During Access Control List definition, a document acquires the following attributes: Users allowed access to the document...");

a category and description of the requested job, (col. 7, lines 22-62; "...document type..." is interpreted as category, "For example, John Smith is requested to review, or sign, a given

document by a specific date" where the requested activity is the job description field and the date is the date of delivery);

using the processor to save the document (col. 5, line 61 thru col. 6, line 8 and col. 7, lines 10-21; "Document publication is the process by which a user extracts a copy of the document" and "Then, the user appoints a target directory for the file" and "The external document is indexed once and access to the external document is managed by the document manager 21 using the Access Control List facilities." and where the user may save the document in a local data store and then designate the document as an external document); and

using the processor to send indexing information related to the document to an index remote from the computer system of the requester (col. 7, lines 10-21; "The external document is indexed..." and "...access speed to documents externally stored in a repository...").

Hajmiragha discloses a document management system. Hajmiragha does not disclose where a document is an RFQ template and an expiration date of the RFQ.

However, Beran teaches a similar system that handles documents for requisitioning goods and services. Beran teaches an expiration date of the RFQ (paragraph 60; "This record will continue to store vendor responses until the bidding

closing date specified in the original RFX record" where the bidding closing date is interpreted as the expiration date); and

where the document is an RFQ template (paragraph 27; "As shown in FIG. 4, a requisitioner first enters request document data on an HTML header page that has been provided to the user/requisitioner 400. The software enabling the entry of request document data is part of the agency requisitioner module 208. The request document header data for entry preferably includes a reference number for the request document and a confirming number" and where the web page is interpreted as a template).

It would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art (PHOSITA) at the time of invention to modify the system disclosed in Hajmiragha to incorporate where a document is an RFQ template and an expiration date of the RFQ as taught by Beran because this would provide a manner for directing what the replies to the RFQ's should include, thus aiding the client by providing the desired information.

Hajmiragha and Beran disclose a document management system. Hajmiragha and Beran do not disclose an award criteria; receiving, at the requester, one or more replies to the RFQ template from one or more suppliers; and automatically evaluating the one or more received replies based on the award

criteria in the RFQ template and identifying a supplier based on the evaluation.

However, Heimermann teaches a similar system which handles documents for requisitioning goods and services. Heimermann teaches

an award criteria (col. 29, lines 31-45; "...order-negotiation parameters entered into the Order Negotiations Parameter Setting sub-element (Fig. 2) (28) of the Central Procurement Authority Functions (13) of the Internal Module (2) of the System by C.P.A. officials, the System makes deductive determinations as to which bid to accept to fill orders in a manner optimal for government and similar entities");

receiving, at the requester, one or more replies to the RFQ template from one or more suppliers (col. 29, lines 46-56; "...lowest-price bid..."); and

automatically evaluating the one or more received replies based on the award criteria in the RFQ template and identifying a supplier based on the evaluation (col. 29, line 46 thru col. 30, line 14; "...automatic acceptance of a bid...").

It would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art (PHOSITA) at the time of invention to modify the system disclosed in Hajmiragha and Beran to incorporate an award criteria; receiving, at the requester, one or more replies

to the RFQ template from one or more suppliers; and automatically evaluating the one or more received replies based on the award criteria in the RFQ template and identifying a supplier based on the evaluation as taught by Heimermann because this would provide a manner for automatically making awards of the requested jobs, thus aiding the client by making their job easier and more cost effective, since the awarding is done according to objective criteria by a computer, rather than by humans who may have a personal preference.

Referring to claims 14:

Hajmiragha discloses sending requester filter criteria indicative of suppliers authorized to reply to the document (col. 7, lines 33-54; "A set of process flow templates are used during the Access Control List definition process." and "During Access Control List definition, a document acquires the following attributes: Users allowed access to the document...").

Referring to claim 15:

Beran teaches receiving a reply to the document from a supplier (paragraph 60; "...the vendor can submit the data as its bid").

Referring to claims 16:

Heimermann teaches entering award criteria indicative of criteria considered in awarding a job corresponding to the RFQ to a supplier (paragraph 183).

Referring to claim 17:

Heimermann teaches evaluating the received reply based on the award criteria (paragraph 183); and suggesting a winning supplier based on the evaluation of the award criteria (paragraph 183).

Referring to claim 18:

Heimermann teaches weighting the award criteria according to a predetermined weight (paragraph 183; the system primarily makes awards based on price, but also "factors in" other considerations, which necessarily requires assigning a predetermined weight to the considerations).

Referring to claim 38:

Hajmiragha discloses

registering with an document index builder (col. 6, lines 24-29; "The designated external system must be registered...");

receiving a document template at a supplier computing system describing a requested job from the document index builder, the document template being generated by a manufacturer and including (col. 7, lines 33-52 where the reviewer is interpreted as a supplier, the reviewer receives an email with a link to the document, which once clicked, results in the document being downloaded to the reviewer's system, and where the creator of the document is interpreted as the manufacturer):

a category and description of the requested job, (col. 7, lines 22-62; "...document type..." is interpreted as category, "For example, John Smith is requested to review, or sign, a given document by a specific date" where the requested activity is the job description field and the date is the date of delivery);

a date of delivery field (col. 7, lines 22-62; "...document type..." is interpreted as category, "For example, John Smith is requested to review, or sign, a given document by a specific date" where the requested activity is the job description field and the date is the date of delivery);

using a document reply engine at the supplier computing system to generate a reply to the document template by providing information requested in the document template (col. 7, lines

33-58; where the reviewer, or supplier, replies to the document by performing an activity such as reviewing or signing the document, which is the information requested in the document template); and

transmitting the reply from the supplier computing system to a manufacturer that generated the document template (col. 7, lines 33-58 and col. 9, lines 46-51; where the reviewer performs the requested activity and the reply is a rejection, the reply is transmitted to the document originator, or manufacturer).

Hajmiragha discloses a document management system. Hajmiragha does not disclose where the document is an RFQ; and an expiration date of the RFQ.

However, Beran teaches a similar system that handles documents for requisitioning goods and services. Beran teaches an expiration date of the RFQ (paragraph 60; "This record will continue to store vendor responses until the bidding closing date specified in the original RFX record" where the bidding closing date is interpreted as the expiration date); and where the document is an RFQ template (paragraph 27; "As shown in FIG. 4, a requisitioner first enters request document data on an HTML header page that has been provided to the user/requisitioner 400. The software enabling the entry of request document data is part of the agency requisitioner module

208. The request document header data for entry preferably includes a reference number for the request document and a confirming number" and where the web page is interpreted as a template).

It would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art (PHOSITA) at the time of invention to modify the system disclosed in Hajmiragha to incorporate where the document is an RFQ; and an expiration date of the RFQ as taught by Beran because this would provide a manner for directing what the replies to the RFQ's should include, and what type of document is desired in the system thus aiding the client by providing the desired information and by limiting the system to a particular type of document, which simplifies the system.

Hajmiragha and Beran disclose a document management system. Hajmiragha and Beran do not disclose an award criteria for the requested job.

However, Heimermann teaches a similar system which handles documents for requisitioning goods and services. Heimermann teaches

an award criteria for the requested job (col. 29, lines 31-45; "...order-negotiation parameters entered into the Order Negotiations Parameter Setting sub-element (Fig. 2) (28) of the Central Procurement Authority Functions (13) of the Internal

Module (2) of the System by C.P.A. officials, the System makes deductive determinations as to which bid to accept to fill orders in a manner optimal for government and similar entities”).

It would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art (PHOSITA) at the time of invention to modify the system disclosed in Hajmiragha and Beran to incorporate an award criteria for the requested job as taught by Heimermann because this would provide a manner for describing what criteria is desired to win a job, thus aiding the client by making the criteria clear.

Referring to claim 39:

Hajmiragha discloses the document template further including filter criteria accessible by the suppliers to identify RFQs for reply (col. 10, lines 16-19; a searching and filtering capability).

As above, Beran teaches where the document is an RFQ.

Referring to claim 40:

Beran discloses the RFQ template further comprising a geographic location for the service provider (paragraph 19; “The system administrator can also enter data regarding agency

delivery points, local area business preferences, miscellaneous agency-wide default values and any general requirements or instructions for documents originating from the agency.").

Referring to claims 41 and 42:

While Hajmiragha, Beran, and Heimermann disclose document management systems, the prior art does not disclose a field for specifying quality standards.

However, the Examiner asserts that a field for specifying quality standards is a label for the items and adds little, if anything, to the claimed acts or steps and thus does not serve to distinguish over the prior art. Any differences related merely to the meaning and information conveyed through labels (i.e., the type of the item) which does not explicitly alter or impact the steps of the method does not patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include a plurality of fields as disclosed in the prior art references because the type of information saved in the fields of the RFQ does not functionally alter or relate to the steps of

the method and merely labeling the items in the field of the RFQ differently from that in the prior art does not patentably distinguish the claimed invention.

Referring to claims 43 and 44:

Beran teaches the RFQ template further comprising a field for quantity of goods (paragraph 29; "On the second HTML page of the request, the requisitioner 300 enters other line item data including the quantity of the goods.").

Referring to claim 45:

Hajmiragha discloses

a job description field, and a delivery date field (col. 7, lines 22-62; "For example, John Smith is requested to review, or sign, a given document by a specific date" where the requested activity is the job description field and the date is the date of delivery);

saving the document template in a data store local to the manufacturer computing system (col. 5, line 61 thru col. 6, line 8 and col. 7, lines 10-21; "Document publication is the process by which a user extracts a copy of the document" and "Then, the user appoints a target directory for the file" and "The external document is indexed once and access to the external document is

managed by the document manager 21 using the Access Control List facilities." and where the user may save the document in a local data store); and

sending indexing information for the document template (col. 7, lines 10-21; "The external document is indexed..." and "...access speed to documents externally stored in a repository...").

Hajmiragha discloses a document management system. Hajmiragha does not disclose providing an RFQ template using an RFQ generation engine at a manufacturer computing system, the RFQ template having a plurality of fields for receiving job information pertaining to a requested job, the plurality of fields including: a location field; and where the document is an RFQ template.

However, Beran teaches a similar system that handles documents for requisitioning goods and services. Beran teaches providing an RFQ template using an RFQ generation engine at a manufacturer computing system, the RFQ template having a plurality of fields for receiving job information pertaining to a requested job, the plurality of fields including (paragraphs 22-27 & 60; "As shown in FIG. 4, a requisitioner first enters request document data on an HTML header page that has been provided to the user/requisitioner 400. The software enabling

the entry of request document data is part of the agency requisitioner module 208. The request document header data for entry preferably includes a reference number for the request document and a confirming number" and where the web page is interpreted as a template):

a location field (paragraph 19; "The system administrator can also enter data regarding agency delivery points, local area business preferences, miscellaneous agency-wide default values and any general requirements or instructions for documents originating from the agency."); and

where the document is an RFQ template (paragraph 27; "As shown in FIG. 4, a requisitioner first enters request document data on an HTML header page that has been provided to the user/requisitioner 400. The software enabling the entry of request document data is part of the agency requisitioner module 208. The request document header data for entry preferably includes a reference number for the request document and a confirming number" and where the web page is interpreted as a template).

It would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art (PHOSITA) at the time of invention to modify the system disclosed in Hajmiragha to incorporate providing an RFQ template using an RFQ generation engine at a manufacturer

computing system, the RFQ template having a plurality of fields for receiving job information pertaining to a requested job, the plurality of fields including: a location field; and where the document is an RFQ template as taught by Beran because this would provide a manner for directing what the replies to the RFQ's should include, thus aiding the client by providing the desired information.

Hajmiragha and Beran disclose a document management system. Hajmiragha and Beran do not disclose the RFQ template having a field including an award criteria field; and automatically evaluating the one or more received replies based on the award criteria in the RFQ template and identifying a supplier based on the evaluation.

However, Heimermann teaches a similar system which handles documents for requisitioning goods and services. Heimermann teaches

the RFQ template having a field including an award criteria field (col. 29, lines 31-45; "...order-negotiation parameters entered into the Order Negotiations Parameter Setting sub-element (Fig. 2) (28) of the Central Procurement Authority Functions (13) of the Internal Module (2) of the System by C.P.A. officials, the System makes deductive determinations as

to which bid to accept to fill orders in a manner optimal for government and similar entities"); and

automatically evaluating the one or more received replies based on the award criteria in the RFQ template and identifying a supplier based on the evaluation (col. 17, line 4-11; "Those suppliers or supplier-applicants whose rating scores fall to 50 points or below will be declared ineligible to act as suppliers to the government until their rating score exceeds 50 points).

It would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art (PHOSITA) at the time of invention to modify the system disclosed in Hajmiragha and Beran to incorporate the RFQ template having a field including an award criteria field; and automatically evaluating the one or more received replies based on the award criteria in the RFQ template and identifying a supplier based on the evaluation as taught by Heimermann because this would provide a manner for automatically making awards of the requested jobs, thus aiding the client by making their job easier and more cost effective, since the awarding is done according to objective criteria by a computer, rather than by humans who may have a personal preference.

While Hajmiragha, Beran, and Heimermann disclose document management systems, the prior art does not disclose a job category field.

However, the Examiner asserts that a job category field is a label for the items and adds little, if anything, to the claimed acts or steps and thus does not serve to distinguish over the prior art. Any differences related merely to the meaning and information conveyed through labels (i.e., the type of the item) which does not explicitly alter or impact the steps of the method does not patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include a plurality of fields as disclosed in the prior art references because the type of information saved in the fields of the RFQ does not functionally alter or relate to the steps of the method and merely labeling the items in the field of the RFQ differently from that in the prior art does not patentably distinguish the claimed invention.

Referring to claim 46:

Beran teaches wherein the plurality of fields in the RFQ template further comprises an RFQ expiration date field (paragraph 60; "This record will continue to store vendor responses until the bidding closing date specified in the original RFX record" where the bidding closing date is interpreted as the expiration date).

Referring to claim 47:

Heimermann teaches wherein the plurality of fields in the RFQ template comprises a supplier pre-designation field, and wherein receiving job information comprises receiving manufacturer filter criteria into the supplier pre-designation field indicative of particular suppliers that are authorized by the manufacturer to reply to the RFQ template (col. 17, lines 4-11; where the filter criteria that the scores of the suppliers must exceed 50 indicates that only the suppliers who meet this requirement are authorized).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 27 June 2011 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Without explicitly stating it, applicant seems to be arguing that Hajmiragha is nonanalogous art. Examiner respectfully disagrees. In response, it has been held that a prior art reference must either be in the field of applicant's endeavor or, if not, then be reasonably pertinent to the particular problem with which the applicant was concerned, in order to be relied upon as a basis for rejection of the claimed invention. See *In re Oetiker*, 977 F.2d 1443, 24 USPQ2d 1443 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, Hajmiragha is directed to document management. Applicant's invention is directed to management of RFQ's, or request for quotations, which are a specific type of document. Since RFQ's are documents, a person having ordinary skill in the art would look to Hajmiragha for solving a problem related to RFQ or document management.

Applicant further argues that the prior art does not teach an RFQ template with various particular fields. Examiner respectfully disagrees. As is specifically provided above, the prior art includes the fields described.

Contact

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to CARRIE A.

STRODER whose telephone number is (571)270-7119. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. ET.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jan Mooneyham can be reached on (571)272-6805. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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/CARRIE A. STRODER/
Examiner, Art Unit 3689

/Gerardo Araque Jr./
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3689